

The purpose of the day long National Summit was to continue the call for high school reform to lower the dropout rate and increase graduation rates across the nation. The summit was sponsored by the National Governors Association, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, MTV, Time Magazine and Civic Enterprises, Inc. North Carolina has received \$30 million in grants from the Gates Foundation for high school reform since 2003.

Summit participants included 500 key policymakers and business representatives from across the nation and high school students from Washington, D.C., New York, Indiana and the Clement Early College High School in Durham, one of Easley's first *Learn and Earn* schools.

This is not the first time that Easley's *Learn and Earn* program has received national attention. In December 2006, CBS News praised Easley's efforts as "revolutionary," describing the program as high school reform "on steroids" and a "jumpstart that saves time and resources." In the June 12, 2006 edition of *Newsweek*, North Carolina's high school reform program was cited as one of the nation's promising efforts to prepare people for globalization and changing economic times in the 21st century.

###